



**Sussex Montessori School
Board of Directors
September 17, 2024, 6:30 p.m.**

Board of Directors Present: Linda Zankowsky, Jessica Bradley, Trish Hermance, Sean Steward, Bob Wheatley, Mason Falligant and Penny Short

Others Present: Lisa Coldiron (Head of School), Precious Benson (Director of Operations), Debra Smullin (Administrative Assistant), Dr. Taquil Foster (Guest)

The meeting was called to order at 6:34 p.m.

Approval of Agenda

A Motion to approve the agenda was made by Trish Hermance and seconded by Jessica Bradley. The Motion was approved unanimously with no objections and no abstentions.

Public Comment – No public comment

Consent Agenda-

Minutes

A Motion to approve August 20, 2024, minutes was made by Mason Falligant and seconded by Jessica Bradley. The Motion was approved unanimously with no objections and no abstentions

Committee Reports-

Finance Committee – Precious Benson

Precious presented the financials to date through August 31, 2024

- August 31, 2024, represents (2/12) months actual or 16.67 % of the current fiscal year.
- We have received 40.0% of our State and Local revenues.
- We have received 20.2% of our federal revenues.
- We have spent 19.4% of our Total operating budget.

Interest Policy- Sean Steward

A Motion to approve the Interest Policy with Priority adjustments for Montessori Training was made by Sean Steward and seconded by Jessica Bradley. The Motion passed unanimously with no objections and no abstentions.

Enrollment update- Lisa Coldiron

- As of September 16, 2024, total enrollment for the 24/25 school year is 384

Facility Committee- Bob Wheatley

- Bob discussed updates from the facility committee meeting, including:
 - Playing Field and Playground
 - Budget Estimate- \$30,000-40,000 for equipment and installation.
 - Consult with University of Delaware's, Ed Lewandowski for insights and potential collaborations.
 - ARPA Funding- Extended to December 15th with two reimbursement applications submitted.
 - Playground Funding- Awaiting Quotes, planning interactions with similar
 - projects for best practices
 - Storage Building- meeting with Ed Lewandowski and Laurel Redevelopment

- Longwood Grant- has been submitted, meeting scheduled for next week.
- Storage Building- Quotes received from 3 Contractors- Estimated cost- \$ 30-32K

Building Community/Enrollment- Jessica Bradley

- Enrollment Strategies:
 - Parent Ambassadors:
 - Engaging long-term, invested families to advocate for the school.
 - Outreach Focus- Targeting the eastern side of the community due to low awareness.
 - Resource Development- Collaborating with Sussex Tech and Dell Tech for marketing support.
 - Volunteer Support
 - Enrollment Enhancement Ideas
 - Surveys

Development Committee- Linda Zankowsky

- Linda reviewed our Future projects and Potential Funders
 - Grants Submitted:
 - Longwood- 750K
 - Crystal Foundation- 500K
 - Discover Bank- 75K
 - Precious will maintain a spreadsheet for non-federal and non-capital grants
 - Longwood Foundation- meeting to discuss Barn funding and wraparound project details (Sean, Bob, Lisa, Mason & Mike)

Executive Committee- Linda Zankowsky

- Linda will be preparing to transition out of the role and Trish will take over a Board Chair. Linda will be with us until January 1, 2025, and Trish assuming full responsibilities thereafter.

HOS Report- Lisa Coldiron

- Lisa discussed:
 - the non-credible threats reported on social media affecting schools nationwide.
 - Holocaust Education Trip

Executive Session-

A Motion to move to Executive Session was made by Jessica Bradley and seconded by Trish Hermance at 6:52 p.m.

The following topics were discussed: Personnel issues, Board Succession, Enrollment

A Motion to accept the withdrawal requests as discussed in Executive Session was made by Trish Hermance and was seconded by Jessica Bradley. The Motion passed unanimously with no objections and no abstentions

A Motion to accept Dr. Taquil Foster-Lewis as a new Board Member to fill the Parent seat was made by Penny Short and seconded by Jessica Bradley. The Motion passed unanimously with no objections and no abstentions

A Motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Trish Hermance and seconded by Bob Wheatley and passed unanimously at 8:18 p.m.